MARVEL COMICS

QUASAR

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PROJECT PEGASUS, THE NATION'S PREEMINENT ENERGY RESEARCH FACILITY IN UPSTATE NEW YORK...

WENDELL VAUGHN . . . THE FIRST EARTH MAN EVER APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. BONDED TO THE ENERGY-TRANSFORMING QUANTUM-BANDS THAT ARE BOTH WEAPONS AND SYMBOLS OF HIS STATION, HE FIGHTS AN ONGOING BATTLE TO DEFEND ALL LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE FROM COSMIC EVIL!

STAN LEE PRESENTS . . .

QUASAR

FOR OVER A MONTH A SINGULAR HUMAN-SIZED COCOON HAS BEEN HOUSED IN THE PROJECT'S COMPOUND FOR PARANORMALLY ENERGIZED HUMANOID RESEARCH...

COMPOUND SCIENTISTS ARE UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS TO MONITOR LIFE SIGNS BUT DO NOT INITIATE ANY INVASIVE PROCEDURE WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PERMISSION OF QUASAR...

THAT'S IT FOR ME, PONS. I'M GOING TO FINISH MY ROUNDS AND THEN HIT THE HAY.

I'VE GOT TO DO MY LOG ENTRIES. G'NIGHT.

"SUBJECT 718. NO CHANGE IN THE EXODERMAL ENCASEMENT. MINUTE FLUCTUATIONS IN THE COSMIC ENERGY LEVELS INSIDE CONTINUE.

"WHILE WE'VE BEEN TOLD THAT A SUPERHUMAN WOMAN WOVE THIS CHRYSALIS TO REGENERATE DAMAGED TISSUE, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT FORM SHE MAY TAKE WHEN SHE EMERGES...

THREE MEN AND A COCOON!

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"END LOG. 12:21 AM, 4-2--

EN--?

WHAT THE DEVIL--?

PROJECT SECURITY, CURRENTLY QUARTERING THE WHIZZER, HAYWIRE, BLUE SHIELD, AND SKYLARK...

SHEEZ, *LINDA*, LAST TIME WE INVITE *YOU* TO PLAY. YOU'RE CLEANING UP.

FULL HOUSE, BOYS.

CODE RED ALERT: COMPOUND, CORRIDOR 11.

ALERT

HUMAN RES MODULE

THAT'S WHERE THAT COCOON IS! *WHIZZER*, COULD YOU--?

WHIZ--?

ALERT

HUMAN RES MODULE

MOST OF THE TIME IT'S QUIET AS A *TOMB* IN THIS PLACE...

SKREET

...GOT TO ADMIT I ENJOY AN *EMERGENCY* NOW AND THEN!

LET'S SEE, CORRIDOR 11-- RIGHT HERE!

WHAT IN THE--? SOMETHING'S GOT THE *COCOON*-- SOMETHING VAGUELY *HUMANOID!*

THEY'RE STEALING IT! STOP THEM!

GOTCHA!

MEANWHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GALAXY, MORE THAN A DOZEN SUPERHUMAN BEINGS STARE AT THE SKY--

--NOT QUITE KNOWING WHAT TO MAKE OF A PLANET SEEMINGLY IDENTICAL TO THE EARTH ORBITING THE LABORATORY-WORLD OF THE ENIGMATIC STRANGER..*

LET ME SEE IF I GOT THIS *RIGHT*. YOU SHIFTED THE *ENTIRE PLANET* THOSE PEOPLE DOWN THERE CAME FROM INTO *OUR DIMENSION*--

--JUST SO YOU COULD *STUDY* IT?

STRANGER...?

I HOPE QUASAR DOESN'T EXPECT US TO *BATTLE* THE STRANGER! I *OWE* HIM BIG TIME -- HE RESTORED MY *TRANSFORMATIONAL ABILITIES!*

HEY, ALL'M-- IS THAT *OUR* EARTH I'M SQUINTIN' AT?

IT CERTAINLY *LOOKS* LIKE IT, BULL.

AMAZING THE MIRACLE OUR LORD HAS WROUGHT.

PRAISE THE *STRANGER!*

*AS SEEN IN THE STARBLAST LIMITED SERIES, STILL ON SALE.--INFOMERCIAL MIKE

ANSWER ME, STRANGER!

DO NOT *PUSH* ME, EARTHMAN. I NEED EXPLAIN MY MOTIVES TO *NO ONE!* NOW TAKE YOUR FRIENDS AND GO BEFORE I DECIDE TO MAKE *SPECIMENS* OF YOU ALL.

〈MOONDANCER...VOYAGER... WHAT DO WE DO *NOW?* WE RESIGNED FROM THE *IMPERIAL GUARD*--THEY WILL *NOT TAKE US BACK* AFTER THE WAY WE VIOLATED THE *TREATY!*〉*

〈WE REMAIN HERE, *WIND*. FIND WAYS TO SERVE OUR LORD AND MASTER!〉

CAROL, YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY *I* DO ABOUT THE STRANGER?

CONFLICTED? YES.

HE'S PROBABLY GOING TO *EXPLOIT* THAT WORLD UP THERE SOMEHOW--

--BUT I *OWE HIM* FOR RESTORING TO ME MY *EMOTIONAL CONNECTION* TO MY PAST!

IS THAT OUR WORLD--OR AN *ILLUSION?*

IT HAS THE *PSYCHIC RESONANCE* OF OUR WORLD, CAPTAIN.

I HAVE NOT THROWN IN WITH THE LOT OF YOU TO SAVE OUR WORLD ONLY TO SEE IT COME TO *THIS!* I WILL *CONFRONT* THIS SILVER-HAIRED STRANGER...!

*TRANSLATED FROM THE *SNI'AR*. --SHY MIKE

BUT EVEN AS THE OMINOUS OVERSHADOW MAKES HIS MOVE...

RIGHT BEHIND YA, PINKY!

WHAT IS THIS?

STRANGER, I BID YOU HOLD!

(EH--?)

WHOA! THAT'S A MANIFESTATION OF THE LIVING TRIBUNAL -- CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE WHOLE BLINKING UNIVERSE!

WHILE, BACK ON EARTH, SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDWEST...

WLADYSLAV-- HANG ON! WE'VE GOT IT! WE'VE GOT IT!

UH, MR. SHINSKI -- LOOK! THEY'RE BACK!

FRANK, GET OVER HERE AND HELP US! THIS THING FEELS LIKE IT WEIGHS A TON!

UH, RIGHT.

YOUR REFRACTION SUITS HELD UP WELL, MARIS...

YES, THEY DID--EASY, EASY....!

BRING THE LASER-SCALPEL!

I'M UNCERTAIN HOW THICK THE EXO-DERMIS IS, I'LL START WITH A TWO-INCH DEEP INCISION AND GO DEEPER AS NECESSARY.

DON'T WANT TO SLICE OPEN THE CREATURE INSIDE. IT'D BE MESSY.

TEN BREATHLESS MOMENTS LATER...

THAT BLINDING LIGHT! IT'S GLOWING LIKE THE FIRST ONE DID!

ADJUST YOUR GOGGLES OR YOU'LL GO BLIND!

READY? ONE--TWO--THREE--TIP!

FRANK-- SWADDLE THE METAHUMAN WITH *OPAQUE GAUZE!*

YES, SIR.

HOLD *ON*, WLADYSLAV-- JUST A FEW MORE SECONDS...!

"ONCE WE WERE FANTASTICALLY *WEALTHY MEN*, ON THE VERGE OF REALIZING OUR DREAM OF *WORLD DOMINATION*...

"TOGETHER WITH OUR LATE COLLEAGUE *HAMILTON*, OUR *ENCLAVE* SOUGHT TO CREATE A *SUPER-RACE* WITH COSMIC POWERS THROUGH WHICH WE WOULD TRANSFORM THE WORLD INTO A *UTOPIA*...

DO YOU *FEEL* IT YET, OLD FRIEND? DO YOU FEEL THE *REGENERATIVE FLUIDS* OF THE COCOON ACTING UPON YOU?

...

IS IT *WORKING*...?

I'VE ATTACHED THE *VITAL SIGN PICK-UPS*-- CHECK THE *MONITOR!*

"TWICE WE SUCCEEDED IN CREATING *PROTOTYPES* OF THESE METAHUMANS.

"BUT BOTH '*HIM*' AND '*PARAGON*' REVILED US AS EVILDOERS AND TURNED *AGAINST* US...

YES... HIS *HEART*-- *LUNGS*-- ALL SIGNS SHOW MARKED *IMPROVEMENT*, WE'VE REVERSED THE SYMPTOMS OF HIS *STROKE!*

STILL IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN JUST HOW MUCH THE COCOON WILL BE ABLE TO DO TO REVERSE THE *RAVAGES OF TIME!*

"HAMILTON PERISHED WHEN OUR CITADEL OF SCIENCE-- OUR *BEEHIVE*-- WAS *DESTROYED*--

OH, *CARLO*, HOW DID IT *COME* TO THIS?

"IT TOOK US *YEARS* TO SCRABBLE TOGETHER EVEN THE *CRUDEST* OF LABORATORIES!

"THEN WLADYSLAV HAD HIS FIRST *STROKE*--

"--AND THE ONLY WAY WE COULD THINK OF TO *RESUSCITATE HIM* WAS IN ONE OF THE *COSMIC COCOONS* OF ONE OF OUR CREATIONS!

"BUT IN ORDER TO GET THE *EQUIPMENT* WE NEEDED TO CAPTURE OUR *WAYWARD METAHUMAN* WAS BY SECURING THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR *OLD RIVALS*--

"--THE TWISTED SCIENTISTS OF *AIM*!

YES... AIM PROVIDED US WITH THE FINANCIAL MEANS TO REPAIR OUR *TRANSFER GRID*, CREATE THE *REFRACTION SUITS*, AND HIRE A *LAB ASSISTANT*, ALL RIGHT...

...IN EXCHANGE FOR TURNING OVER PARAGON--OR HER--OR WHATEVER OUR METAHUMAN LAST CALLED ITSELF--TO THEM.

AIM MAY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CREATE LIFE-MIMICKING *ADAPTOIDS* BUT THEY NEVER MATCHED *OUR* ACCOMPLISHMENT--GENE-SPLICING TOGETHER *HUMAN LIFE* ITSELF!

AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, AIM CAN *HAVE* HER. SHE WAS THE ONE WHO KILLED OUR *DREAMS OF GLORY*--!

IS...SHE... *HERE*...?

HEY-- I THINK WLADYSLAV *SAID* SOMETHING!!!

I HAVE TO *SEE* HER.

WLADYSLAV, YOU'RE *AWAKE*... AND *COGENT*!

I WANT TO *SEE* HER.

WHO? YOU MEAN--?

YES... OUR *CREATION*. SHE WAS THE *ONLY THING* THAT MADE ME WANT TO KEEP ON LIVING...

YOU *HEARD* HIM, FRANK. BRING THE METAHUMAN *HERE!*

YES, *MR. MORLAK.* UH, SAY, I THINK SHE'S *SEMI-CONSCIOUS...*

WHAT... WHERE...?

NO MATTER. WE SHOT HER UP WITH ENOUGH *TRANQUILIZER* TO IMPAIR A FOOTBALL TEAM.

COME *HERE*, MY CHILD! DON'T BE *AFRAID.*

THAT'S ONE OF THE MEN WHO TRIED TO *ENSLAVE ME* AFTER MY FIRST BIRTH!

I HAVE SEEN YOU ON THE TV SINCE YOU ASSUMED *FEMALE FORM*, CHILD, AND HAVE LONGED TO SEE YOU *IN PERSON*. MY, HOW *BEAUTIFUL* YOU'VE BECOME!

TRULY YOU ARE THE *ONLY GOOD THING* THAT HAS COME OUT OF MY MISSPENT LIFE!

HAVEN'T *REGENERATED* FULLY... STILL WEAK AS A *KITTEN*... I'M AT THE *MERCY* OF THESE MEN.

GOD, I'M GLAD I DID NOT *DIE* BEFORE SEEING MY ONLY DAUGHTER!

"DAUGHTER"...?

HAS HE GONE *SENILE*? THE METAHUMAN-- *OUR CHILD?!?*

HMMM... WELL, I NEVER *THOUGHT* ABOUT IT THAT WAY BEFORE. BUT IN A WAY, HE'S *RIGHT*...

I JUST HAD ANOTHER THOUGHT--

--COME HERE SO THEY CAN'T *HEAR* US!

WHAT IF WE WERE TO *EXTRACT* SOME OF HER *DNA*, COMBINE IT WITH *OUR OWN*, AND THEN INJECT IT BACK INTO *OURSELVES?*

HMMM, I SEE WHAT YOU'RE *GETTING* AT! THROUGH *GENE THERAPY*, WE MAY BE ABLE TO *TRANSFORM OURSELVES* INTO *METAHUMANS* LIKE HER!

BUT WHAT ABOUT *AIM?* THEY REQUIRE THAT WE TURN HER *OVER* TO THEM.

ONCE WE'VE BEEN *TRANSFORMED*, IT WON'T MATTER *WHAT* THEY REQUIRE! WE WILL BE *MASTERS OF THE WORLD!*

WHILE, ON THE STRANGER'S WORLD...

MY BUSINESS HERE IS WITH YOU ALONE!

HEY! WHAT'S--?

AWAY WITH THESE MORTALS!

TO WHAT DO I OWE THE HONOR OF THIS *VISIT*, MAGISTRATE?

THAT WORLD IS CONTAMINATED WITH AN ENERGY BEYOND THIS MULTIVERSE.

ITS PRESENCE HERE UPSETS THE UNIVERSAL BALANCE. YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO BRING IT HERE.

UNFORTUNATELY, SIR, IT CANNOT BE RETURNED TO ITS *PLACE OF ORIGIN*. THE APERTURE TO ITS UNIVERSE HAS BEEN *SEALED* AND TO REOPEN IT WOULD LET IN A HIDEOUSLY *POWERFUL ENTITY*.

WATCHER! DID I GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO WATCH?

YOU DID NOT.

I DEMAND THAT THE WORLD BE SEALED.

I WANT NONE OF ITS ANOMALOUS POWER LEAKING OUT INTO THE GREATER UNIVERSE.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?

ELSEWHERE...

HMH?

WHAT HO! WE BE--ON EARTH!?

YES... CHICAGO, FROM THE LOOKS OF THE SKYLINE!

QUASAR, THAT *GIANT YELLOW MAN* WHO DID THIS TO US--WHO WAS HE?

QUASAR...?

HE JUST TOOK TO THE *SKIES, CAPTAIN MARVEL.*

KAYLA WASN'T TELEPORTED BACK HOME WITH US! I'M GOING *BACK* FOR HER!

BLAST THAT STUPID *TRIBUNAC!*

YOUNG QUASAR *DISAPPEARS!*

WITHOUT EVEN A *THANK YOU.*

LATER...

...SO WERE YOU TO GIVE US A SMALL *SAMPLE* OF YOUR *DNA*, I BELIEVE WE COULD *INJECT* IT DIRECTLY INTO POOR SHINSKI AND *ACCELERATE* THE HEALING PROCESS.

POOR SHINSKI!

IF ONLY WE'D HAVE THOUGHT OF THIS *BEFORE* SHE AWAKENED, WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO *NEGOTIATE*.

I DON'T *TRUST* THESE MEN AT ALL, BUT I HAVE NO WISH TO SEE ONE OF MY *PROGENITORS DIE...!*

VERY WELL, BUT I WARN YOU... *NO TRICKS.*

QUEEF

NO TRICKS, CHILD.

WE ARE *OLD MEN*. WE WOULD NOT *RISK* INCURRING YOUR WRATH--EH?

FRANK! ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR *MIND*? WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*? I COULD HAVE GOTTEN AN *AIR BUBBLE* IN--

TAKING DNA SAMPLES FROM THE SPECIMEN IS BEYOND THE PARAMETERS OF YOUR *AGREEMENT* WITH AIM, DOCTOR. I CANNOT *ALLOW* IT.

YOU--*DARE*--!?! YOU, A LOWLY *LAB ASSISTANT!*

SO I WISHED FOR YOU TO *BELIEVE.*

IN TRUTH, I AM *AIM AGENT MST-3K.*

UHH!

POONT

WHEREAS THE TWO OF YOU ARE NOW *EXPENDABLE.*

POONT

YOUR TURN NOW, PROFESSOR SHINSKI --THEN THE ENCLAVE IS *NO MORE!*

NO-- *PLEASE*-- SPARE ME-- I CAN DO YOU NO *HARM!*

FROOSH

HOWEVER, I *CAN!*

ADRENALINE SURGING *THROUGH* ME--MUST BE ACCELERATING MY *RECOVERY*--I FEEL LIKE I'M BURSTING WITH *RENEWED ENERGY!*

FEELING *BETTER* ARE WE, METAHUMAN SPECIMEN?

I AM *NO* SPECIMEN--

--I...AM...

KISMET!

I AM NO MERE MAN. I AM AN *ADAPTOID!* AND THANKS TO THE GENETIC SAMPLE OF YOURS I HAVE ABSORBED, I AM NOW A *COSMIC BEING*--

--A *PARAGON!*

AM I SUPPOSED TO BE *IMPRESSED?*

YOU AND YOUR CREATORS ARE TOTALLY *REDUNDANT!*

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MILKY WAY...

CREATED A CONTAINMENT SPHERE AROUND ME SO I DIDN'T RIP A HOLE IN THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE WHEN I QUANTUM-JUMPED...

...AND HERE'S THE EARTH FROM THAT OTHER UNIVERSE I LEFT KAYLA ON!

I GO THROUGH ALL THAT NONSENSE WITH THE MOON-PUSHING DEVICE... SKELETRON... THE STRANGER... THE HEROES OF THIS OTHER EARTH...

...AND I STILL DON'T HAVE IN MY ARMS THE REASON I UNDERTOOK IT ALL!

THAT CHANGES NOOOWWWW!

WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT? I HIT SOMETHING.

AN INVISIBLE BARRIER OF SOME SORT?

WELL, I GOT JUST THE THING...!

A QUANTUM-DRILL!

Whoutugh!

WHAT IN--? BETTER QUANTUM-JUMP *THROUGH* IT!

I...I *CAN'T*-- IT'S LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING FROM THE PLANET *JAMMING* MY *BANDS*!

WHAT *IS* THIS?

AND...

ALL RIGHT, STRANGER. WHAT'S THE *BIG IDEA*? THAT EARTH YOU HAULED OUT OF THAT OTHER *MULTIVERSE*-- THERE'S SOME KIND OF *BARRIER* AROUND IT. WHAT *GIVES*?

THE LIVING TRIBUNAL *SEALED IT UP*.

WHAT *HAPPENED* THEN?

I AM *NO HAPPIER* ABOUT THE SITUATION THAN YOU, QUASAR. I HAD HOPED TO *STUDY* THE PHENOMENA OF THAT WORLD FOR *CENTURIES* TO COME.

MY *GIRLFRIEND*-- WHERE *IS* SHE?

DOWN THERE. SHE'S BEEN PERMANENTLY *CONTAMINATED* BY IT. SHE'S ONE OF *THEM* NOW.

NO! NO, SHE'S *NOT*! THERE MUST BE *SOME WAY* TO GET HER FREE! THERE *MUST*!

EARTH...

THIS COSMIC ENERGY YOU WIELD IS MOST *ADVANTAGEOUS.*

HE HAS ADAPTED THE FORM I POSSESSED WHEN I FIRST EMERGED FROM MY GESTATION COCOON!*

*HULK ANNUAL #6. -- ROCOON

HE IS *NON-HUMAN!* I MUST GIVE HIM NO TIME TO *ACQUAINT* HIMSELF WITH MY *COSMIC POWER!*

KOOOM

THE NON-HUMAN HAS SURELY BEEN *DECAPITATED!*

BUT--!

IT'S RESEALED! HE'S--!

THOUGH I HAVE REPLICATED YOUR COSMIC POWER, I STILL POSSESS MY SUPERIOR ADAPTOID RESILIENCE!

LET US SEE IF YOU CAN RECEIVE AS WELL AS YOU CAN DISPENSE.

VROOM

I BECAME ACTIVE TOO SOON! I'M STILL NOT UP TO FULL POWER!

OHH!

ONE *MORE* SUCH BLAST AT POINT-BLANK RANGE SHOULD *SEVER* ALL CONNECTION BETWEEN YOUR *PHYSICAL FORM* AND YOUR *LIFE ESSENCE*.

GOODBYE, SPECIMEN!

AHHG!

NOT WITH MY *DAUGHTER*, FIEND!

Unnhh...

SHINSK!!

DISSOLVING...WHAT DID YOU...D--

WHAT DID YOU DO, SHINSKI?

THE WEAPON WAS A *GENETIC VIRUS* THE OTHER TWO HAD DEVELOPED... DESIGNED TO ATTACK YOUR DNA. BY REPLICATING YOUR DNA STRUCTURE THE AIM CREATURE HAD MADE HIMSELF *VULNERABLE* TO IT.

YOU HAD PLANS TO *KILL* ME...?!?

THE *OTHER TWO* HAD... IF YOU PROVED *UNCONTROLLABLE* LIKE LAST TIME, I COULD NOT *TALK* THEM OUT OF CREATING IT.

PERHAPS IT WAS *LUCKY* THEY HAD.

BELIEVE ME, MY DAUGHTER. I WOULD HAVE DONE *EVERYTHING* IN MY POWER TO KEEP THEM FROM HARMING YOU--!

COME, OLD MAN, WE HAD BEST GET YOU BACK IN THE *REGENERATIVE COCOON*-- YOU ARE FAR FROM *WELL*.

DO WHAT YOU CAN FOR *MORLAK* AND *ZOTA*. THEY ARE NOT *ENTIRELY BAD*-- THEY'VE BEEN *LOYAL FRIENDS* TO ME FOR YEARS...

AND IF THEY *RECOVER*, I AM CERTAIN THEY WILL LEARN TO *FEEL* TOWARD YOU WHAT *I* DO.

I'LL DO WHAT I *CAN*. REST *WELL*, OLD MAN...

...*FATHER*.

AND AFTER GENERATING TWO MORE COCOONS...

I HAVE SPENT MY SHORT EXISTENCE TRAVELING THROUGH *SPACE*, SEEKING A *MATE*, TRYING TO BECOME AN *ADULT* WITHOUT EVER HAVING EXPERIENCED WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A *CHILD*...

YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE SOMETHING *NEW*... SOMETHING *VITAL*... SOMETHING *HUMAN*.

I WILL *WATCH OVER* YOU ALL WHILE YOU SLEEP... I WILL ACT AS YOUR *MOTHER* UNTIL I CAN LEARN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE YOUR *DAUGHTER*...

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GALAXY...

. . . MY FAULT.

I'M THE ONE WHO GAVE KAYLA THE ACCURSED STARBRAND IN THE FIRST PLACE.

MY FAULT KAYLA'S LOST TO ME FOREVER... STRANDED ON A STRANGE WORLD... ALONE, WITHOUT A FRIEND...

THE WORLD BELOW...

YO, KAYLA!

WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU'RE SAFE, BABE. ALL THE ALIENS GOT CLOBBERED.

WHERE ARE ALL THE REST?

WE ALL GOT ZAPPED BACK HERE. SOME DIDN'T LIKE IT SO THEY TOOK OFF AGAIN. I WAS MORE INTERESTED IN SEEING HOW YOU WERE... SO HERE I AM!

THAT'S SWEET.

METALLURGE--?

YEP. THOUGH FRIENDS CALL ME CHRIS. CHRIS BARNETT.

YOU GOTTA BE SICK OF HANGIN' OUT IN A BARN...

...SO HOW'D YOU LIKE TO SEE MY WORLD?

I'D LIKE... THAT, CHRIS.

COOL. LET'S GO.

NEXT: MAKKARI and the GALACTIC MARATHON!